

Executive Council of Graduate Faculty

Minutes for 18 September 2020

Present: Jennifer Roberts (Chair), Jody Brook, Hui Cai, Matt Gillispie, Heidi Hallman, Yan Li, Joshua Miner, Andrew Short, Jide Wintoki, Michael Wolfe, Mike Werle (Ex Officio), Amanda Ostreko (Staff), Kristine Latta (Staff), Amber Roberts Graham (Staff), Jessy Carolina Ayestas Hernandez (Staff)

Absent: Robert Parsons, Matt Tidwell, Anna Paradis (Staff)

Announcements

- Applications to participate in the 3MT Competition opened on Monday and will close on Friday 25 September.
- Applications for the Doctoral Student Research Fund (DSRF) opened Monday and will close on Sunday 27 September.
- Information about UGF applications will be coming soon.

Review of Minutes

- 28 August 2020
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Graduate Faculty Nominations

- Approved as Proposed:
 - Dennis Huntington Reid (ABSC)
 - Sabrina M. W. Torres (CPE)
 - Sheida K. Raley (SPED)
 - Kelly K.S. Matsunaga (EEB)
 - Angela G. Subulwa (GEOL)
 - Valeri A. Farmer-Dougan (ABSC)
 - Joy K. Ward (EEB)
- Approved with Modification:
 - Eric Zuber (MUSC)
 - Sam Seyong Um (MUSC)
 - Mary Jeanneen Adair (ANTH)
 - Fernando Rodriguez-Morales (EECS)
 - Ryan A. Altman (MDCM)
 - Jonathan Peters (JOUR)

Petitions for Policy Exception

- [Admission to Graduate Study](#)

- The Council agreed that new fall 2020 students with international credentials will receive a one-semester deferral of the enrollment hold verifying KU’s receipt of final, official transcripts on an as-needed basis. Departments and the student’s school must support each deferral request. Students will need to request a deferral from their department and departmental staff will initiate an admissions petition. This request will then be reviewed by the school. If the department and school support the request, Graduate Admissions will approve the deferral and move the enrollment hold to the summer term.

Policy Revision Proposals

- [Doctoral Program Time Constraints](#)

- Second Read
- Historically, this has been the policy that contained a physical, on-campus residency requirement. Among other things, the proposed revisions eliminate such a residency requirement and replace it with enrollment requirements that set a bar for rigor and engagement, regardless of whether the mode of delivery is online or on-ground.
- The Policy Office has answered the Council’s question from the last meeting. If the policy will no longer include most of the elements indicated by the current title, the correct approach will be to retire the current policy and publish the proposed draft, once approved, as a new policy with a new title. Please provide feedback on the proposed new name, as well.
- In summary, the campus-wide stakeholder feedback indicates a need for further discussion and development. In particular, several stakeholders in different schools are concerned about the proposal of four, three-credit-hour semesters as the engagement requirement for all doctorates.
- The attached draft proposes a different approach: requiring minimum engagement in a doctoral program of either two full-time semesters (as defined by [University policy](#)) or an equivalent number of credit hours spread over more semesters of part-time enrollment.
- Highlights of feedback from campus-wide stakeholder review:
 - * What will be the expectations for students who come to KU trailing new faculty hires?
 - * Uniformly allowing a minimum of 3 hours per semester for the Ph.D. as well as professional doctorates undermines the marketability of professional doctorates. Several stakeholders strongly encouraged the Council to consider differentiating the requirements for professional doctorates from those for the Ph.D. For excerpts, see below:
 - “four three-credit semesters in no way represents or supports sustained engagement and academic rigor. I worry that this will start a downward slide that ultimately devalues a doctoral degree from KU.” This stakeholder felt that, for a Ph.D. in particular, “role modeling and active involvement with an intellectual community are of critical importance.”
 - “If the goal is to allow more professional practice doctorates, why not eliminate or do away with the residency requirement for those programs entirely? You

could keep or modify the PhD residency to be 6 hours. That would be a great distinction between the professional practice doctorates and the PhD. Faculty need rules to prevent them from inevitably caving in to the demands of students, which is especially the case in the credit hour driven environment.”

* Financial Aid and Scholarships clarified several points about how this policy change might interact with financial aid eligibility rules.

- Graduate students can be awarded scholarships at any enrollment level, as long as they meet any enrollment requirements established by the scholarship giver.
- In order to receive Federal Financial Aid, including loans, students must be enrolled at least half time. [University policy](#) defines half-time graduate enrollment for fall and spring semesters at a baseline 5 hours, unless someone has a 3G appointment or is active-duty military. 3Gs and active-duty service members are half-time at 3 hours per semester.
- Students enrolled less than half time may also use up the grace period on their loan repayment and might end up having to repay student loans while still in school.

1. These points may not be the deal-breaker they seem. KU overall is not obligated to ensure that all programs guarantee student eligibility for financial aid, though we do encourage departments to consider those questions when determining a new program’s structure. The primary target audience for the programs under development are non-traditional and working-professional students who may be choosing to take fewer hours and progress more slowly in part because they are not interested in borrowing and are not relying on other major types of aid for their ability to complete a degree.

* Consider allowing current students to complete their degrees under the existing policy, applying this policy only for those admitted Spring 2021 or later. Allowing some students in a cohort to be governed by one policy and some the other might set up a significant disparity that, in this case, may negatively affect international students.

* Is it necessary to have any residency or enrollment requirement at all? “If a student completes the required credit hours for the degree (and all unit academic requirements...), why does it matter whether they were on campus or contiguously enrolled? flexibility [to meet the learning objectives/outcomes necessary to obtain the degree on their own terms] is what can help keep them engaged while residency or contiguous enrollment requirements can lead to disengagement of students who cannot meet those (debatably non-academic and arbitrary) requirements.”

– The Council discussed the feedback provided and reviewed the new proposal. They determined that the new proposal is ready for a second round of campus-wide stakeholder feedback.

● Proposed Bylaws: Executive Council of Graduate Faculty

– Last year, the Council accepted the charge of developing bylaws. The most recent round of revision occurred in January 2020. Vice Provost Roberts hopes the Council will finalize its bylaws during the Fall 2020 semester.

– The Council discussed several elements and made the following decisions:

- * The VPGS shall be non-voting except in the event of a tie, when they cast the deciding vote.
 - * If a member notifies the Council they cannot attend a meeting, they may arrange for a proxy to participate in the discussion on their behalf and represent for the Council how the school operates. The proxy cannot exercise their own vote or carry a member's vote to the meeting.
 - * The proposed formal policy-review process is acceptable.
 - * Specific reasons for removal from the Council need not be enumerated but the Bylaws should clarify that removal is possible for a variety of reasons, as determined by the VPGS and Council.
 - * Further research is required concerning committee formation.
- ADPT
 - First Read
 - The Council reviewed a rough draft of this proposal with Professor Lamb in March. At the time, it had not been fully fleshed out into a policy proposal template.
 - The Council made a preliminary review of this draft but decided to postpone discussion until the 9 October meeting

Next Meeting: Friday 9 October 2020, 2:00 p.m.